



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION TODAY

A STATEMENT OF BASIC PHILOSOPHY

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THE INTERNATIONAL
COUNCIL OF
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



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International Council of
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Christian education today

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION TODAY

A Statement of Basic Philosophy



Developed Cooperatively by Protestant Evangelical Forces of the
United States and Canada through the International
Council of Religious Education



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Introductory Statement

IN 1937 the International Council of Religious Education authorized the appointment of a representative Committee on Basic Philosophy and Policies to deal with the underlying philosophy of the Christian education movement and to project plans and policies for its continued direction. Luther A. Weigle, Dean of the Divinity School of Yale University, has served as the Chairman of this committee. The committee presents this statement as covering the philosophy of the movement. Its recommendations regarding policies have been incorporated in the work of other committees and in projects of study and activity under way in a variety of channels, and, therefore, are not dealt with in this document.

This statement is addressed to ministers, to lay church members, to those professionally engaged in Christian education, and to the public generally. Regarding its purpose the committee has made the following summary to which attention is especially called at this point:

"There is no attempt in this statement to impose a creed or to make any divisive test. The International Council recognizes the right of its constituent members to freedom of belief and action. All are to be expected to interpret and to supplement this statement in the light of their own experience, and to give to it emphasis and implementation in accordance with their own conviction as to what best furthers the spirit and goals of the Kingdom of God. In cooperative unity a rich diversity of Christian experience may be expressed without fear or equivocation."

In the spirit of this statement the document is released to all those interested in the program of Christian education in the churches.

March, 1940

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Christian Education Today

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION is no innovation. It is as old as Christianity itself. Jesus Christ was a teacher. The Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles state that they were written in order that Theophilus might know the truth concerning the things wherein he was instructed. Candidates for membership in the early church were carefully instructed as catechumens. Preaching, in the early centuries, was not merely to proclaim the gospel, but for instruction in the Christian faith and for the edification of believers and the building up of the church. Christians kept alive the light of learning in the Middle Ages; and the Christian church was largely responsible for the founding of the schools and universities of Europe. The Protestant Reformation, with its emphasis upon the authority of the Word of God as recorded in the Scriptures and upon the right and responsibility of the individual to read and understand and accept this Word for himself, gave great impetus to the educational interest inherent in the Christian faith.

The modern movement for Christian education is rooted in this great Christian tradition. It is in the spirit of Christian faith that most of the colleges and universities of the United States and Canada have been established, beginning with the founding of Harvard College in 1636. The principles of Christian nurture in family life, always implicit in the Christian heritage, were given explicit and striking expression by Horace Bushnell in his book on *Christian Nurture*, first published in 1842. 1846

The Sunday school movement, beginning with Robert Raikes in England in the 1780's, was planted in America in the second decade of the nineteenth century, and has grown until today one-half of the Sunday school enrollment of the world is in the United States and Canada. The American Sunday School Union was organized in 1824; the International Uniform Sunday School Lesson system was initiated in 1872; and the International Council of Religious Education was formed in 1922.

The Christian youth movement of America began with the organization of student Christian societies in the colleges in the closing years of the eighteenth century, and was given great impetus by the organization of Young Men's Christian Associations and Young Women's Christian Associations from the middle of the nineteenth century on, and by the growth of the Young People's Societies of Christian Endeavor and kindred societies in the 1880's. It now includes many types of organizations for older children and young people.

With the twentieth century began the influence of psychology upon religious education. The growth of the child study movement, the development of psychology as a natural science and the consequent emergence of the distinct fields of educational psychology and

the psychology of religion, and the initiation of what was termed the scientific study of education, issuing in a quite new emphasis upon educational method—were factors contributing to changes in educational procedure generally which led in the direction of what is now called progressive education. It was inevitable that Christian education should feel the force of these developments, and that teachers of religion should scrutinize their objectives, materials, and methods in the light of psychology. At the same time there was a general awakening to the danger involved in the growing secularization of public education, unless this could be matched by a corresponding increase in educational effectiveness of the Sunday schools and other agencies of Christian education.

So emerged what has been known, in a specific sense, as the religious education movement. In 1896, at the request of an organization of teachers of little children, the International Sunday School Lesson Committee issued a special course; and in 1908 it was decided that this Committee should devise and issue a completely graded series of Sunday school lessons in addition to the Uniform series which it had been issuing year after year since 1872. In 1903 the Religious Education Association was organized, its membership drawn from the whole of the United States and Canada, and its purpose declared to be threefold: "To inspire the educational forces of our country with the religious ideal; to inspire the religious forces of our country with the educational idea; and to keep before the public mind the ideal of religious education, and the sense of its need and value."

The International Council of Religious Education, formed in 1922, brought together the International Sunday School Association, with its history rooted far back in the nineteenth century, and the Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations, a comparatively new organization of men and women professionally engaged in the educational service of various Protestant denominations. The International Council of Religious Education has been since its organization a cooperative agency of the evangelical Protestant churches of the United States and Canada for Christian religious education. In it are associated forty-two denominations, through their boards of Christian education or Sunday Schools, thirty state or provincial councils, the Religious Education Council of Canada, and other more local organizations, principally city and county councils of religious education.

The common purpose of the churches, through these organizations and the International Council of Religious Education in which they are associated, is to educate in Christian faith and life. This purpose is based upon the twofold conviction that Christian faith may be nurtured, informed, and sustained by educational methods, and that education should be animated by Christian faith.

The following statement concerning *Christian Education Today* has been prepared by the International Council of Religious Educa-

tion as a brief exposition of the basic principles underlying its work, and as a stimulus to further studies in fields within which policies are to be determined. It is addressed to the ministers of the churches, to their lay members, and to the public generally as well as to those who are professionally engaged in the work of Christian religious education.

There is no attempt in this statement to impose a creed or to make any divisive test. The International Council recognizes the right of its constituent members to freedom of belief and action. All are to be expected to interpret and to supplement this statement in the light of their own experience, and to give to it emphasis and implementation in accordance with their own conviction as to what best furthers the spirit and goals of the Kingdom of God. In co-operative unity a rich diversity of Christian experience may be expressed without fear or equivocation.

I. Christian Faith in the World Today

IT HAS BEEN WELL SAID that the central issue of life today, humanly speaking, the choice upon which the future depends, is whether the life of mankind is to be ruled by force or guided by reason and good will. Underlying this are other questions: Is man an animal which has acquired a degree of skill and cunning; or is he an intelligent rational being, able to control his desires and passions? Is he arbiter of his own destiny, or the bearer of obligations and responsibilities that are inherent in the structure of reality? Is he the creature of impersonal forces or a child of God?

To these questions Christian faith answers that the ground and source of all existence is God. His ways are discerned in nature, and conscience bears him witness. His word was proclaimed by the Hebrew prophets; and in Jesus Christ he was made manifest in human life. His power is almighty; his rule is just; his nature is love. To man he is Creator, Sustainer, Sovereign, and Father. Man is not only the creature and the subject; he is the child of God. Man attains his true stature only as the Spirit of God dwells in him, and empowers him to rise above the surge of impulse and the self-will of sin to a life controlled by reason and good will, in obedience to the laws of God's own nature. Man is not in himself divine; and God is no mere projection of human desires. It is God who has made us; he is more than a name for our ideals. Paul's word is profoundly true: "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God."

Christian faith inspires the Christian way of life. Its central principle is love of God and love of fellow-men. It seeks to bring into fellowship all mankind, for all—of whatever race or nation—are children of the One God.

Christian faith is not changeless or static. It is not assent to a fixed set of formulas; it is not trust in a code of laws. It is life with

God, in response to his redeeming love as revealed in Jesus Christ his Son, and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Christian faith has found changing expression, throughout the centuries, in varying forms of Christian fellowship and in statements of creed and doctrine which reflect the problems and the language of the successive centuries. Christian faith welcomes new truth and rejoices in the discoveries and achievements of the human mind in various fields of science and invention, literature and the arts.

It is when men forget God, think themselves to be self-sufficient or even pose as divine, and regard their achievements as ends in themselves rather than as means to the fulfillment of God's purpose for mankind, that they fall into sin, and meet frustration and disaster. We are living in such a period. Unprecedented in its scientific achievements, holding promise of human welfare hitherto unimagined, this second quarter of the twentieth century is yet a period of widespread human ill.

A new paganism has emerged in our time. To the spiritual indifference and moral callousness which are the easy vices of every generation are now added open denial of Christian truth and rejection of the Christian way of life. The cult of power is in the ascendant. Racial antagonisms have sharpened. Men have begun again, as in the days of the Roman Empire, to worship the State, and to compel others to that idolatry.

But this is no ground for despair. God has not failed us; we have failed to place first the things of his Kingdom. And in the very sharpness of the issue lies ground for hope. Christians are being drawn away from emphasis upon minor things, from preoccupation with incidental and outlying refinements of theological dogma and details of ecclesiastical polity, and are being led to concentrate their thought and action upon the great central principles of the Christian gospel.

A new life is astir in the Christian churches. It has found expression in the Conferences held at Jerusalem in 1928, at Oxford, Edinburgh and Madras in 1937 and 1938, and at Amsterdam in 1939, and in the developing plans for a World Council of Churches. The churches are affirming their faith in the Christian gospel with a fresh realization of its meaning and truth. They are asserting their freedom, under God, to proclaim this gospel in the face not only of the claims of the totalitarian State to omniscience but of the pretensions of scientific method to a monopoly of knowledge. They are acknowledging their obligation, by God's grace, to give themselves with intelligence and devotion to the redemption of this present world from the unchristian practices, the social and economic injustice, and the outright evil which so largely possess it.

That the new life of the churches will make large use of the educational method, is to be expected. Their way is not back, toward obscurantism; but forward, with eyes open to the truth. The new movement does not deny science or history or culture; it sees these

as instruments to the purpose of God. The natural affiliation of the gospel is not with methods of coercion or violence, emotional propaganda or mob psychology, but with the reasonable persuasiveness of truth and the fellowship of good will.

It is not the business of the International Council of Religious Education to formulate a creed that would seek to express the common faith of the churches of which it is the cooperative agency. These churches differ greatly in their attitude toward creeds, from those which profess the full range of the historic symbols of the Christian tradition to those that acknowledge no creed save the Word of God as recorded in the Scriptures. It is, however, the right and duty of the International Council of Religious Education to declare its Christian faith.

We call attention to the admirably clear and adequate statements of faith that have been made on behalf of the world-wide Christian Church, by the recent Conferences to which we have referred. We would associate ourselves with these statements, and find in them a platform for Christian education today. We urge upon our constituency particularly the careful study of the statement on "The Christian Message" made at Jerusalem in 1928, and the statements on "The Faith by which the Church Lives" and "The Church—Its Nature, Function and Evangelistic Task" made at Madras in 1938.

In recent years Christian education has been under fire from both of two extreme positions—from secular-minded humanism on the one hand and from arbitrary supernaturalism on the other.

To the left are the non-theistic humanists, who undertake to cultivate religious education without God. For them, religion is simply another name for devotion to human ideals, and belief in God is regarded as an irrelevance and a distraction from the real business of living.

Over against this humanistic extreme has emerged a tendency to drive too far in the opposite direction, and in effect to deny religious education in the name of God. This is the tendency of those who so exalt the arbitrariness of God's sovereignty, the infinity of his being, his absolute other-ness, as to deny that either in man or in nature can any way to the knowledge of God be found. It is the tendency, again of those who over-emphasize the non-rational or super-rational element in religious experience, the utterly mysterious, the numinous. It is the tendency of those who overstress the role in religion of poetry, mythology, and paradox.

Christian education will not yield to these extremes. It is animated by Christian faith. And Christian faith responds to the whole truth of which these are but partial expressions. As an ethic of love, Christian faith shares in the social idealism of the humanist. As the gospel of the Kingdom of God, it proceeds from the divine initiative, the act of God who in Christ seeks to reconcile the world to himself. In Christianity, reason and revelation, knowledge and faith, are not sundered or opposed, but organically related.

It is our obligation, as it was the obligation of our fathers in the Christian movement, to reinterpret Christian faith in terms of the living experience of our own day, to discover its wider and deeper implications, and to bring it into effectual relation with the issues of contemporary living. In doing so, we should constantly remind ourselves that there are depths of meaning in the Christian gospel that far outrun our limited capacities to apprehend them. Nor should we seek to bind our own conceptions of Christian faith upon the future. Rather, we should by the understanding and appreciation of the great historic symbols seek to use them without being bound by them and to free those who will come after us to explore the depths and the heights of Christian truth which belongs to the centuries and which cannot be fully stated within the limited framework of any given historic period.

II. Educational Principles and Method

E DUCATION, generally speaking, is society's way of seeking stability and progress. It is a method of inducting persons into the ongoing life of the race, and of equipping them to contribute to that life. It is a means of conserving whatever gains of attitude, knowledge and skill have thus far been made, and of assuring further gains.

Education takes place at the growing points in human experience. It deals with individuals who are growing or capable of growth, in knowledge, skill, or capacity. It is concerned, not merely with the transmission of a culture, a body of knowledge, or a set of habits, as though these were ends in themselves; but with the use of these transmitted factors to develop persons fitted in character and ability to deal with new situations and to add to the race's resources of knowledge, skill, and wisdom.

Education involves intelligence. Training may be concerned with action only; but education is more than training. Education takes place when persons are made aware of the factors involved in the situation, and in the light of the relevant considerations exercise judgment and choice.

Education looks to the past, the present and the future. To the past, for thence it draws its capital. To the present, for here are living, active persons confronted by the opportunities and responsibilities of real life. To the future, for it is called so to deal with those persons that their action in the present situation will not thereafter thwart and confine them but give them added competence and wisdom.

Christian education may be described in twofold fashion. It is education fully aware of the Christian heritage, animated by Christian faith, and based upon Christian principles of living. Or again, it is the Christian society seeking to secure stability and progress, to serve God and to help man, by the method of education. All that

has been said above of education generally, is true also of Christian education. Ideally, if all human society were Christian, there would not be the present distinction between the two.

Christian education takes place through fellowship in Christian living and the sharing of Christian faith. Its method is by participation in the activities of the Christian society, coupled with explication of Christian faith, its principles, and the motives actually operating in the life of this society. Just what the immediate fellowship is, may vary. It may be the family, a class, a small group of friends, or the inclusive fellowship of the church. In all these Christian fellowship seeks not only participation in action, but the understanding and acceptance on the part of the individual of Christian faith and life. Teachers, parents and other mature members of the fellowship seek definitely to help the immature to understand the meaning of this faith as it has been experienced by others, and to lay hold for themselves upon the source of this faith. The point is that the educational method is twofold. It involves association, fellowship, or participation in life on the one hand; and articulate thinking, conversation, explication or instruction on the other. It includes both the induction of habits and feelings, and the sharing, communication and gaining of ideas.

If all groups were Christian, and all Christians had a faith that was intelligent and articulate, the task of Christian education would be relatively easy. But that is not the case. The great preponderance of the experiences in which both mature and immature persons participate are not only non-Christian in the sense that they have no specific reference to Christian motives, but many of them are distinctly unchristian. And so poorly has Christian education served the needs of the adult generation that all too large a proportion of those with whom growing persons are associated in their experiences are not competent, if they are Christian, to explain their faith and its relevance to the situation.

In the Christian church growing persons participate. To the degree that it is able to engage them in the ongoing life of the church, in its worship and in the various activities which it undertakes or fosters, the church is able to employ a full educational method which interweaves fellowship and participation with communication and instruction. To some degree, moreover, the church can go farther and initiate projects and excursions for various groups, with a view to affording experiences that will lead to inquiry, and implementing instruction with activity. All this can take place under the direct guidance of those who are responsible for the educational program of the church.

But when all is done that can be done in the way of providing experiences under the direct guidance of the church, the stubborn facts remain that many of the active experiences thus fostered by the church may be relatively pale and uninteresting compared to similar experiences in the world outside; that in the nature of hu-

man life growing persons are certain to have a tremendous body of experiences that cannot be duplicated or simulated by the church; and that their education is inevitably weighted in the direction of this multitude of every-day experiences which the church cannot control. With respect to these experiences, the growing person is on his own, so to speak. The church cannot follow him and protect him. It must do something better—it must equip him to face these experiences for himself, to see the issues involved, and to deal with them on his own account as a Christian. The growing person needs a body of free ideas—ideas and ideals that are not restricted by invariable, specific association with the experiences in which they chanced to appear, but that have been shaken free from such particular limitations and have become insights, generalizations, and commitments applicable to different and new situations. He needs methods of inquiry which will enable him to learn the relevant facts, and sound habits of decision, to order his action with discernment and wisdom.

The concern of Christian education is to help persons, whether young or old, to live as Christians—to face the actual situations that their world presents to them and to resolve the issues involved in terms of Christian values and purposes. In a world of chance attention needs to be given as much to the possibilities of present experience as to the precedents of past experience. The end of education is not the acquisition of knowledge or ideas as such, but the organization of growing knowledge for the more competent and fruitful ordering of life. This means that education should be pointed definitely toward action in the making and remaking of personal and social life.

Christian education is related to every phase of the whole of living, involving the family, vocation, the functions of citizenship, and the intellectual, moral, and aesthetic activities. In its effort to pervade every area of the experience of persons and groups it does not lose its essentially religious function. It is concerned with the *whole* of life, but it is concerned with making every phase of life *Christian*.

Christian education addresses itself to the Christian growth of the whole person. It takes into full account the emotional life of persons and groups as well as their intelligence. It definitely and systematically cultivates appreciation. This it does, not as something apart from the total learning process, but as an integral phase of dealing with life situations in Christian ways. Such appreciations of life's higher values may well find their chief expression in the warm synthesis of Christian worship, when persons come before God in prayer, and commit themselves to his will and grace.

While vital and creative Christian education must start with the present interests of persons and groups, it does not end there. It is the obligation of Christian education to expand these immediate and in many cases temporary interests into comprehensive and abiding interests that in their outreach will embrace the entire range of experience of the Christian in his interaction with his

total world. A program of Christian education should be based upon discovered needs, which at the beginning may be or may not be felt by persons or groups. This involves consideration of the Christian heritage and contemporary culture as well as of personal experience.

Therefore, while education is focused upon the growing person, it is not child-centered. Education takes place in the growing generation at the point where historical culture and contemporary living meet. Here the accumulated traditions of the past are undergoing re-testing, re-appraisal and reconstruction in the light of expanding experience; and at the same time contemporary experience is undergoing interpretation, appraisal, and re-direction in the light of our historic Christian heritage.

Christian education, to be vital and creative, must deal with the current experiences of persons and groups, must be rich in content of knowledge, and must teach growing persons to understand and respond to the Word of God.

The present experience of Christians is the present moment in a long historical process of Christian faith and life. In its essential nature, present experience cannot be dissociated from the traditions of historical experience without distortion, nor neglect the great Christian heritage without becoming superficial and unimportant. In its endeavor to free itself from the domination of tradition and subject matter and to become a vital experience of life, religious education has sometimes been betrayed into the neglect of a sufficient content of competent knowledge of the nature, the literature, the concepts, and the institutional development of Christianity. To be Christians in the modern world, growing persons and groups need to come into possession of a sound working knowledge of the origin, nature and message of the Bible, the development of Christian concepts, and the growth of the church throughout the world.

Christians have resources beyond those available through human fellowship and teaching. Christian education will cultivate sensitiveness to the Spirit of God creatively at work in the world today, affording new insight by which present experience may be tested, and fresh strength for its reconstruction. To help growing persons to be aware of and responsive to the revelations of God is a major purpose of Christian education today.

Christian education should result in changed and changing life. In the light of the evangelical interpretation of the Christian tradition as well as of our growing knowledge of the nature of man and of God's method of working, this change is not confined to one transforming experience, but is an on-going process through life, frequently beginning in the simple experiences of young children. This change involves definite commitment of oneself to God and a believing sense of acceptance by him. Yet no one such experience may be viewed as final. However sudden its initial stages may be in the case of some persons, the achievement of a Christlike life is a

process which involves the progressive orientation of the whole self toward God and man, deepening insights, growing competence in judging life's experiences, and increasing ability to carry ideas and convictions into effective action. Only as Christian education eventuates in a Christlike life, no matter how successful it may have been in communicating knowledge or in building up technical skills, can it be judged to have fulfilled its function.

The changes which Christian education seeks to achieve are not limited to personal living. They involve society as well. The personal self and society are only different aspects of a total process of interaction. Any attempt to improve individual persons is by the essential nature of personality and society inextricably bound up with social improvement. Consequently it is inevitable that Christian education should address itself to the analysis and appraisal of the processes of social living with a view of bringing to bear upon them at all points where personal values are involved the reconstructive influence of Christian motives and ideals.

Christian education should, at all stages and in all phases, have a definite sense of mission and direction. Otherwise, confusion and ineffectiveness will beset its program. Recognizing this need, the International Council of Religious Education has formulated the following statement of the objectives of Christian education:

I—Christian education seeks to foster in growing persons a consciousness of God as a reality in human experience, and a sense of personal relationship to Him.

II—Christian education seeks to develop in growing persons such an understanding and appreciation of the personality, life, and teaching of Jesus as will lead to experience of him as Savior and Lord, loyalty to him and his cause, and will manifest itself in daily life and conduct.

III—Christian education seeks to foster in growing persons a progressive and continuous development of Christlike character.

IV—Christian education seeks to develop in growing persons the ability and disposition to participate in and contribute constructively to the building of a social order throughout the world, embodying the ideal of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

V—Christian education seeks to develop in growing persons the ability and disposition to participate in the organized society of Christians—the Church.

VI—Christian education seeks to develop in growing persons an appreciation of the meaning and importance of the Christian family, and the ability and disposition to participate in and contribute constructively to the life of this primary social group.

VII—Christian education seeks to lead growing persons into a Christian interpretation of life and the universe; the ability to see in it God's purpose and plan; a life philosophy built on this interpretation.

VIII—Christian education seeks to effect in growing persons the assimilation of the best religious experience of the race, preeminently that recorded in the Bible, as effective guidance to present experience.

III. Christian Education in the Local Church

IN THE LOCAL CHURCH Christian faith and world needs meet to confront the lives of men. The church seeks to have men joyously lay hold on the former and courageously act on the latter. But the church does not regard men merely as vessels for containing and robots for action. It is concerned first of all with persons themselves, and their growth toward and into life with God. The church's method is, in short, what has been described in the preceding section as educational.

Being concerned primarily with the growth of Christian persons and, through them, with the growth and achievement of Christian purposes, the work of a church in its entirety should be pursued in harmony with procedures which are educational. Only thus can its results in the development of Christian personality be assured. When so conceived and practiced, the program of a church will take on the following characteristics:

It will provide for old and young in such a way that each may have a vital part in its purpose and work. It will not look upon immaturity as something of little account, but will regard as an asset its capacity for growth toward the ideal of Christian faith and work. It will foster the continuous growth of adults and expect them to offer guidance and counsel to the less mature.

It will provide a fellowship of old and young in common purposes, activities and life, so that the life of the group may facilitate each, and each may be stimulated and strengthened by the life of the group.

It will regard the family as a cell or unit in the body of Christ, peculiarly adapted to enhance the achievement of Christian values. Hence it will do all in its power to help families become centers of Christian living.

It will seek to guide its people in an experience of worship which is so closely related to their lives as to set them Godward in direction and bring them into the spirit of devotion and piety.

It will provide preaching and teaching which seek not to override men's wills, but invite them to contemplation, insight, commitment, and the achievement of self-direction. Such preaching and teaching will seek to help persons grow in Christian personality by dealing with issues which are vital and crucial, and by stimulating motives which lead to action.

It will so organize its program-making that the entire work of the church may become as fully as possible a creative, cooperative endeavor of all in moving toward Christian goals in personal and social life. In this even the younger members of the congregation can and should have a share.

It will provide opportunities for engaging in Christian work, suited to the maturity and ability of its members, that each may share in the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

In the raising and spending of funds, it will strive not to become so involved in ultimate goals of solvency and service as to overlook the effects on those who pay and those who receive. The giving of substance will be made a joyous act of self-giving, which is rich in its educational values.

It will recognize not only that the entire work of the church must use educational procedures but also that the church itself should be so organized as to make adequate provision for educating its people in the meaning and activities of Christian living. To this end, the responsible officers of the church will not only provide for the corporate worship of God but will also provide adequately for the education of the people through study, discussion and participation in various group experiences of worship and work.

This provision may be through various agencies of the church commonly known by such names as Sunday School, Vacation Church School, Weekday Church School, Young Peoples' Societies, Schools of Missions and Adult Forums. The church should put these agencies under the supervision of a common committee, representative of the church as a whole. Thus the planning for these agencies and their programs will become part of the total program planning of the church and they will be conceived of as agencies of the church and not as independent or even competitive. The church should exercise due care that these agencies shall maintain sound educational standards of organization, leadership and administration.

When the whole task of a church is conceived in educational terms, the function of the minister is redefined. There should be a consequent reorientation of his professional training. In addition to careful training in such fields as biblical studies, church history, theology and homiletics, the minister will need to give more attention to understanding the principles and methods of education and personal guidance. Especially will he need preparation for his particular responsibilities of enlisting, training, supervising, and inspiring voluntary lay workers.

For no church can hope to do its work with professional leadership alone. No matter how clearly the minister or other professional leaders may see the task and the varied agencies for accomplishing it, the realization of their vision is conditioned by the quality and the quantity of lay workers available. That lay workers should carry a great responsibility is of the very genius of the Christian

religion and is a potential source of great power to the church. If the full value of the enlistment of large numbers of lay folk in this task is to be realized they must be carefully chosen and fitted for their work. The motivating, enlisting, and educating of these persons for the various positions constitutes one of the most crucial problems in the whole work of the church.

Back of any plan for enlistment and education of workers lies the necessity of motivation, the development in church members of that feeling of compulsion expressed by the Apostle when he said, "woe is me if I preach not the gospel." The church must too often plead and cajole to have even enough persons to "fill" positions. This lack of an adequate number of people for service may be due to failure on the part of the church. This failure may be in the lack of an adequate plan for enlistment and preparation of workers; it may be that the total educational program has not been raised to a level which demands attention and respect. But often it appears that the life and work of the church does not demand such complete commitment that men and women will put service in advancing the knowledge of Jesus Christ ahead of other demands and fit themselves for this task. Whenever adequate service is lacking, the church should carefully and prayerfully examine its own life and message.

There should be a definite plan for enlisting and educating persons for particular service. Whatever the position of responsibility may be there are some specific knowledges and skills which it demands. These are not native or inherent; they come as a result of a process of guided learning. For this process each particular church must make the necessary provision, or else much that is done may be positively harmful to the Christian development of those whom the church attempts to guide.

In pursuing its endeavor to become educationally effective, both in the development of its own constituency and in influencing the life of the community about it, the local church is not left to strive single-handed and alone. In its own community it may cooperate with other churches and agencies for mutual improvement and co-operative achievement. Usually, also, the local church is a unit in a denomination which puts certain materials and services at its disposal.

Denominational and interdenominational agencies on their part are obligated to provide suggested materials, methods and plans which are practical for the situation and people represented by the local church. The local church on its part will do well to give whole-hearted cooperation to these agencies and aid them in the common endeavor to lift the work of each church to the most effective possible level.

IV. Christian Education in the Family

AS THE PRIMARY and most intimate social group, the family is potentially the most important means of Christian education for all its members. If the purposes, relationships, and attitudes which prevail in the family are basically Christian, and if the activities in which the family engages include those which bring the religious life to articulate expression, we have in the family the ideal setting for Christian education. No greater opportunity confronts the church than that of helping families to achieve this ideal.

The nature of the Christian family is such as to make it peculiarly effective in providing the experience which is basic in the understanding, appreciation and appropriation of the Christian religion. The experience of the love and care of parents leads the child into an understanding of the meaning of the Fatherhood of God. The spirit of love and good will prevailing among the members of the family is basic to an understanding and appreciation of universal brotherhood and good will. The democratic relationships of the family, allowing each to share in its resources and responsibilities in accordance with his needs and abilities, are a concrete expression of the worth of persons. The intimate daily contacts of the family give particular potency to the impact of example, as each seeks to express through his own character the mind of Christ within him. The experience of worship may be peculiarly real when shared with the family as it comes to the highest expression of its common life in its religious atmosphere and in more formal periods of the worship of God.

The Christian family and the Christian church have a common cause and mission, and they need each other. Both are founded upon and bear witness to love as the way of life and community as the ideal in human relationships. Both are menaced by towering economic and political institutions which are self-seeking, competitive, coercive, secular. Both are concerned with Christian education, in order that Christlike character in individuals and Christian relationships in the social group may prevail.

Families need the church. Each family is a relatively short-lived, changing, and unstable group as institutions go. Increasingly, vast impersonal institutional forces seem to determine for the family where it shall live, its physical surroundings, its economic welfare, its size, and sometimes even whether it shall exist at all. Christian families need the mutual support which they can bring to one another through the church. They need the sustenance and encouragement which can come from a venerable, continuous, and powerful institution which shares so fully their purposes and ideals and is dedicated to conserving their basic values.

The church needs the family. So strategic and strong are the educational influences of the family that the church's educational purpose as a whole is dependent in a large measure upon their Chris-

tian quality. Our churches would greatly strengthen their influence by a larger recognition and use of the family as a unit of ministration. By making the Christian quality of family life just as definite an objective as that of individual life, the church would multiply the resources of Christian influence upon her individual members. The support of the church, the loyalty and service it can enlist, and its permanent hold upon the individual are conditioned largely upon the attitudes toward the church which prevail in the family circle. In fact, the family group largely determines for its members whether the church shall have any opportunity whatever to make a significant contribution to their religious education.

The nature and function of the family give it distinct advantages in Christian education. It has the growing person first, and it has him for the largest amount of time during the years of greatest responsiveness and modifiability. It brings to bear on him most effectively the education which comes from social participation and fellowship. It is in the most favorable position to make use of the learner's current interests and needs. It provides a constant living example of what it seeks to teach in Christian living.

The church also has its distinctive contributions to Christian education. It provides the more inclusive Christian fellowship. It stands in a long tradition as the body of Christ and the fellowship of his disciples in doing his work. It has a comprehensive program of Christian work in and through which each member may share in doing the work of Christ. It provides appointed times and occasions for Christian education, and resources in Christian teachers, lesson materials, and conditions under which educational work may be carried on.

The church and the family should stand in relationship as co-workers in Christian education, each doing that which it can best do. At its best, the church school may well represent the combined efforts of the people of the church to provide Christian education which is in continuous relation with what is being done in the families of the church.

Not all families are Christian in spirit and life, and not all Christian families are responding to their full opportunities to provide Christian education. The church will do its best to make up for the failures of inadequate families. It will become the spiritual foster-parent of those children whose parents fail them. But while doing its best in this direction, it will not cease in its efforts to make all families effective centers of Christian education.

In view of the important place of the family in any comprehensive plan for Christian education, the establishing and sustaining of Christian families will itself become one of the goals toward which the efforts of Christian education will be directed. This is the purport of the sixth in the foregoing statement of objectives. Among the outcomes sought under this objective, the following will hold an important place:

The formulation and teaching of a Christian view of marriage, family life and parenthood.

The guidance of young people in building Christian ideals of marriage and family life, and provision for a social life among young people which will be conducive to courtship and marriage between young men and women with similar ideals.

Guidance of home-makers and parents in establishing Christian homes and providing Christian nurture.

Provision of literature and other resources for use in establishing and maintaining Christian family life.

Provision for satisfactory church relationship for all members of the family, so that home and church cooperation may be easy and normal.

Thus church and family serve and support each other, not chiefly from duty or even from choice, but because they have so much in common in their functions and destinies. It is not a question of the church calling upon the family to help put over the church's program. Nor is it a question of the family calling in the church to make up for its failures or to take over a difficult part of its task. Rather it is a relationship of complete mutuality. The family finds its richest self-realization in the larger community of Christian families. The church finds its noblest fruitage in the love and community of family life. Together they seek to develop each person to his fullest spiritual capacities and to extend that love and community to encompass all mankind as children of one Father.

V. Christian Education and Social Action

CHRISTIAN FAITH affirms that God is the Father of all mankind, and that all men are brothers. God's rule is just, his nature is love. The Christian is committed to God's purposes as revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. He seeks to make the will and the way of God regnant in his own life and in all human relationships. He actively seeks for his neighbors that abundance of life which the Father desires for them. Christian faith includes both personal and social redemption. When social conditions make it difficult for persons to live as God would have them live, the Christian engages in such Christian social action as will help to change the conditions which frustrate God's will. These things the true disciple of Jesus will do. Conscious of the wide gap between profession and practice, the church must strengthen its program of Christian education so that those who claim the name of Jesus will increasingly do his will.

It is one of the main purposes of Christian education to motivate young and old with a deep concern for the welfare of all members of the human family. In classes and similar groups, persons of all ages will study the social needs of their neighbors, and plan for such helpful action as is possible and appropriate to their age and

experience. They will strive to learn more concerning the conditions under which these people live, the essential spirit and implications of the Christian Gospel as revealed in the life and teachings of Jesus, the causes of present-day social injustice, the proposals advocated for the amelioration of suffering and social sin, and the methods by which Christians can consistently and effectively work for social redemption. Such a process of education is not complete unless it includes intelligent action for creating better social conditions, action which may express itself in personal or group endeavors.

Action, in itself, is not necessarily a good. All depends upon the motive, the spirit, the intelligence of the action employed. Impulsive and irrational action creates more problems than it solves. Thoughtful action, directed toward Christian ends by methods compatible with the spirit and teachings of Jesus, is a means by which persons may become instruments of God in the fulfilment of his purposes among men. Such action is an inescapable obligation for the Christian. It is an inevitable phase of any sound and realistic program of Christian education.

A primary responsibility of the church is to point the way to the kind of society we would have if the will of God prevailed upon earth. A necessary corollary is that the church should point out fearlessly, in the light of reliable information, what institutions, forces, practices hinder the coming of the Kingdom of God. This turns the Christian inward upon himself, in honest examination of his own motives and habits, in order that he may repent of his own sins and change his ways. It turns the Christian outward upon his world, that he may discover what it is that negates God's purposes and that he may associate himself with others in combat with social evil.

In its program of social education and action, the church will deal with facts. It will not depend upon hearsay. It will not be misled by deep-seated or new prejudices. It will neither become an agent of partisan propaganda, nor an ally of agencies which seek worthy ends by methods contrary to the universal brotherliness which the Christian faith affirms. It will proclaim Christian goals and Christian principles of action, will help its people to evaluate social proposals and movements in the light of these principles, and will suggest ways in which Christian social conviction can be translated into fruitful action.

The church, ideally, is a harmonious fellowship of intelligent persons, responsive to God's will. In the atmosphere of friendly fellowship, it will help young and old to discover their duty with reference to contemporary social situations as well as to their personal habits. Where free minds earnestly seek the truth, there will seldom be complete agreement as to solutions or details of program. But when such free minds are voluntarily committed to the will of God, made known or to be made known, there will be unity even when there is diversity of conclusion. All will be agreed that God's will,

and not their own, shall prevail. In such a spirit of prayerful, thoughtful fellowship, Christians will learn how to respect the honest convictions of others, even though they disagree, to persuade in a spirit of patient kindness, and to go along together in a continuous experience of Christian education.

Out of such studies, first hand observations of human need, and informed discussions will issue action. Now and again, individuals will re-order their lives in the light of new convictions, groups will embark upon organized programs of social service and reconstruction. Classes, societies and similar groups will give of their time, money and energy to befriend their neighbors or to further movements for justice. The church itself will seldom, if ever, in its own name, ally itself with a partisan or class movement in behalf of a specific panacea or legislative program. It must maintain its own unity of spirit and fellowship if it is to continue as a constant force and resource for personal living and for social progress. In the realm of conviction majorities cannot commit conscientious minorities; a majority can speak only for itself. In cases where it seems necessary for the majority so to speak the minority should be fairly interpreted and a situation of freedom and respect created. There may be times when the informed conscience of an entire membership approves some cause which seems clearly to support the will of God, or when the intelligent conviction of an entire church is aroused to oppose some force which is set in opposition to Christian purposes. When such unanimity comes through a process of thoughtful study, the church cannot stop with intellectual conclusions. It must implement its beliefs with concerted Christian action.

One of the necessary ways by which a church fosters high social ends, is to inspire and encourage groups of pioneering persons, within its own fellowship, who are eager to go beyond the present commitments of the entire membership. Such nuclei of committed persons form almost inevitably where there is a vital process of Christian education. Historically, out of such groups of consecrated persons, have developed strong movements of social reform. These Christians become the leaven that leavens the whole lump. Their prophetic passion becomes contagious. If their cause is right, if a sound educational process is pursued, and if the spirit of Christian fellowship is maintained, they will slowly win the support of ever larger numbers of their fellow Christians. If their cause is wrong, the educational process carried on in an atmosphere of Christian fellowship will soon be the means of convincing the church of this fact. An essential element in this educational process is the absence of restraint over such groups and the according of freedom of expression in an atmosphere that respects dissent. And, if it be objected that this gradual educational process is too slow and impotent for the emergency situations of our time, it may be answered that there is no other way by which an enduring Christian civilization can be attained. Any alternative which relies upon emotional mass action does violence to the intelligence and religion of the in-

dividual, produces serious social reactions, and but impedes the development of a Christian social order.

In times of local crisis, the Christians of all churches have a responsibility to the community, a responsibility which includes an earnest effort to discover the truth, to understand the conflicting points of view, to proclaim with brotherliness and courage the Christian principles by which a just solution may be sought, to give assistance to victims of the crisis, and to offer the friendly offices of the churches for the resolution of the difficulty.

What is true of churches, locally, applies also to the church in the nation as a whole. Its business and institutional affairs must be conducted in strict consistency with its Christian profession. It will seek to lead its whole constituency in a program of social study which should issue in Christian action. It will strive to awaken its membership to social awareness, to develop a keen sensitivity to human need. It will make every effort to instruct young and old concerning contemporary problems. It will speak, with prophetic voice, regarding the sin which corrupts men and nations. It will foster experiments of social reformation, and will support projects of Christian service. It will develop, within its widespread membership, an informed and aggressive company of ministers and laymen who lead their fellow Christians in realistic programs of Christian social action.

VI. Evangelism and Extension

“GO YE, and make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you; and I will be with you always, even to the end of the world.” The Great Commission which stands at the end of the Gospel of Matthew indissolubly associates missions and teaching, evangelism and Christian education.

Evangelism is the bearing of articulate witness to the Gospel of Christ, with a view to awaken in others a sense of need, to inspire them to faith in God as revealed in Christ, and to secure their commitment to his gracious will. The whole of the life of the church, and the entire program of Christian education, are properly in the spirit of evangelism.

The idea of evangelism is unduly narrowed if it be limited to the appeal to non-believers only, and not applied to the growth in grace of those who have begun to believe; or if it be thought of as confined to adults, forgetting that the Gospel is for children also; or if it be associated exclusively with preaching or with special missions or seasons of spiritual revival, to the neglect of the everyday witness to Christ which Paul calls the fruit of the Spirit.

The idea of Christian education is in theory meaningless and in practice barren unless it be conceived as a means of bringing the Gospel of Christ to bear in effective, saving grace upon all who come within the range of its influence.

The extension of the Christian message and ideal of life to unreached persons and areas is central to the Christian religion. If this should be forgotten the Christian movement would lose its power. Its times of greatest achievement have been when this zeal for extension was most prominent and central among its motives.

Following a trend in the church as a whole, Christian education in a recent period gave its energies largely to the needed task of improving the quality of its work for those whom it had enlisted in its activities, rather than to aggressive effort to extend its ministry to those beyond its present fellowship. But in the face of the present tragic needs of the world a new sense of mission is developing. The Christian education movement is facing outward again. It is realizing the necessity, the duty, the privilege of extension.

This realization of the opportunity and need of extension expresses itself in a number of directions. A movement is now being developed for "reaching the unreached," as it is sometimes called, which has in mind both unreached persons and unreached geographical areas. Very effective extension work is being done through vacation church schools, weekday church schools and Bible study classes for high school credit. These agencies of Christian education are increasing in number and are enrolling an impressive percentage of non-church pupils. A beginning has been made in the wide dissemination of Christian teaching through the radio; this may quite possibly become one of the most fruitful of all extension enterprises. Again, this movement has led to the organization of laymen with a view to mobilizing in its service their ability and experience in business affairs, administration and promotion. Thus, the word "extension" has come again to a prominent place in the Church's thought.

It is manifest that there must be an organized program by which the resources of the churches will be concentrated upon Christian extension. This program must include those sections of the country where Christian education is not now available and must face there basic problems, such as the merger of parishes, the development of the larger parish idea, and the union of home missions efforts, so that sections of the country far removed from any center of active service now can be reached. Obviously, in the development of this program there must be active partnership between the agencies and the leaders of home missions and Christian education.

It is important to remember that a type of extension effort that seeks to recruit persons for a local church program which is signally failing to hold many of the persons previously enlisted may well be without adequate justification. "Strengthen within" should be the watchword as a basis for sounding the call "extend without."

In the extension program the lay forces, both men and women, will have a growing and important share. It is this type of service to which the lay forces were given in the earlier days of the Sunday

school movement and to which they can give themselves with new vigor and enthusiasm in the immediate future. Lay workers can be utilized in the extension of the movement through organization, education, advertising, and the promotion of these new types of service, in addition to those specific tasks of teaching for which they may be fitted.

A decline in church school membership is reported in some quarters. Though this showing is offset by the growth of vacation and weekday schools, church-related youth movements, and adult study groups, the fact remains that millions of persons remain outside the influence of organized Christianity. Many of these may be reached when the church is kept alive to its duty in the area of evangelism. There are mass aspects of the program of Christian teaching which call upon us to employ and train all who can engage in the task of bringing into the fellowship of the church those who are now unreached.

VII. Cooperation in Christian Education

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION is essentially cooperative in spirit and method. When leaders and learners work together in purposing, planning and carrying out educative activities, they learn and grow more effectively. Cooperation within the local church is essential. Individualistic or divisive policies and attitudes of leaders or organizations prevent rather than promote a wholesome educational situation. A child is at its best when all its auxiliaries and program elements are integral parts of a unified whole.

In most cases a given church shares with neighboring churches the responsibility for providing Christian education for the community. A part of its responsibility to its own members consists in making the general environment in which they live more conducive to Christian living and Christian growth. Some of the services which a church needs to provide for the growth of its own members can best be made available through cooperation with other churches. The Christian experience of its members is enriched by fellowship with other Christian groups. When the churches work together, they can more effectively extend the outreach of Christian education to all persons in the community. A cooperative rather than a competitive approach to the unchurched is most fruitful.

Inter-church or interdenominational cooperation among the forces of Christian education has been prevalent for more than a century. It has been expressed through a great network of agencies, first Sunday school unions, then Sunday school associations, later councils of religious education, and now, increasingly, councils of churches which find their most prevalent and stable program in the educational function.

A natural corollary of this cooperation in the local community is cooperation of Christian forces in larger geographical areas. County, city, metropolitan, and state or provincial councils of re-

religious education, or councils of churches with religious education as a major function, embody such cooperation. Through these the denominational area or regional units work together on matters of common interest, and carry, through the council program, those responsibilities which can best be allocated by the Christian forces to their cooperative agency.

The Protestant churches of the United States and Canada are associated in the International Council of Religious Education through which the national denominational bodies as well as the state and area councils combine their efforts and share their resources in developing many common services in Christian education for their constituencies.

The forty-two religious denominations which cooperate in Christian education through the International Council include a membership of thirty-five million persons, with two hundred and fifteen thousand ordained ministers. Their Sunday schools enroll twenty-one million pupils, with two million teachers and officers; their young people's societies have three and one-half million members. In a thousand youth camps more than one hundred thousand young people are enrolled each summer in preparation for Christian service.

The cooperative activities carried on through the International Council to serve this vast constituency include: research as a basis for curriculum-making and improvement of method; the formulation of common objectives and educational principles; development and administration of a common leadership program; production of bulletins, guidance materials, and standards for the common use of all, basis curriculum outlines and resource materials; promotion of and program materials for vacation and weekday church schools; carrying on of experimental camps, laboratory schools, and field projects; a United Christian Youth Movement; a United Christian Adult Movement; field service and counseling.

The fifteen professional advisory sections of the International Council bring together annually a thousand professional leaders in the various phases of Christian education. Its committees bring together into efficient working groups almost the entire staffs of the constituent bodies. This union of personnel and resources in cooperative undertakings has not only improved and enriched the program of Christian education for all, but has created a Christian fellowship above denominational lines which has richly blessed the participants.

Cooperation in these larger geographical areas facilitates inter-church cooperation in the local community. It produces a program which has enough common elements to form the basis of local cooperation. It helps to preserve the integrity of the local community by rendering the approach to its religious forces from different area or national agencies a unifying rather than a divisive force. It helps to preserve the integrity of the local church as it works both

with its neighboring churches and its own denominational agencies, for there are common elements in the programs of all.

The International Council of Religious Education forms the North American Section of the World's Sunday School Association. For more than fifty years this Association has united the Christian education forces around the world in a common fellowship and a common task. Through it the stronger units in America and Europe have shared in the extension of Sunday school work in all the mission fields.

The International Council of Religious Education is extending its own relationships so as to place Christian education in its proper setting in the total interdenominational scene. The Council now participates in a Joint Field Department, the purpose of which is to unify and strengthen the field services and relationships of seven national interdenominational agencies. Interlocking membership on committees, joint committees, regular joint staff meetings, and frequent conferences in special fields such as research, express the active cooperation of the International Council of Religious Education and its constituent units in the total interdenominational program. Close cooperation of the several interdenominational agencies in program enterprises such as the United Christian Youth Movement, the United Christian Adult Movement, and the National Christian Mission give practical expression to their cooperative relationships.

The essentially cooperative spirit and method of Christian education, the long history of cooperation beginning in the Sunday School Union movement and developing into effective cooperative agencies in the field, and the broadening scope of Christian education in the life of the modern church have laid deeply a foundation and created an atmosphere favorable to the growing ecumenical spirit in our day.

VIII. The Church and Allied Character Education Agencies

THE CHURCH does not stand alone in its devotion to moral ideals and character development. The public school; clubs for boys and girls, such as 4-H Clubs, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts; the Y.M.C.A.; the Y.W.C.A.; and social welfare agencies are allies of the church in that they seek many of the same outcomes in character and life that the church seeks. In fact, many of such types of work have their roots in the church, have developed as a result of it, and thus have a community of interest and purpose with it. The church should be constructively related to the work of these agencies.

There is a growing movement today that seeks to bring together in cooperative effort the public and private agencies responsible for social welfare, character building and crime prevention. Through conferences, coordination of activities, and often through some form of coordinating council, the total resources of the community

are brought together. This is generally desirable in the interest of the learner who must develop unity of purpose and personality. Too often the many and sometimes conflicting appeals from a variety of agencies make this difficult for him. The learner faces many community patterns of behavior that influence him. It has been estimated that a child today may spend as much time in the movies, at the radio and comic sheet as he does in public school. No agency in the community can do much by itself in improving conditions. Public school leaders, for example, are recognizing their responsibility to relate school life to community issues. The church should do no less.

The church has a special responsibility in relation to the work of other agencies. The church seeks to lift all of life to a religious level, because it deals with life in terms of ultimate values as found in the Christian religion. Thus, a part of the church's mission is to stand in the community as the representative and conscious conserver of the Christian interpretation of individual and social life. While it may be regarded as one of the agencies in the community devoted to character development and social welfare, and may effectively cooperate with other agencies, it must in no sense lose its identity as a unique institution.

The church provides motivation and idealism for the finer phases of the community's life; it informs itself thoroughly with reference to the nature of the activities of its allied agencies; it calls attention to the moral and spiritual values in them; it inspires and prepares men and women to participate in their work, and shares in worthy community enterprises; it gives religious direction to efforts in the community to serve the needs of its people. The church must keep before the community the will of God as the high standard to which all human experience must be brought for its interpretation.

The nature and extent of official church relationship that will be established locally will be determined in most cases by the conception of the nature and function of the church which prevails. Different denominations will not regard this matter in the same light. Some Christian leaders will hold that the church should take its place as one of the institutions of the community in any form of organization that may be set up to further the interests of all, exerting what influence it may upon the goals and programs developed. Others will hold that the church, with its peculiar mission and unique character, should not relate itself organically with such agencies, but rather should seek to make its contribution through its own distinctive work and through such cooperation as informal counsel, more evaluation of aims and procedures, and the motivation of large numbers of Christian men and women to participate in the various forms of activity.

There should be the greatest possible unity of approach on the part of the churches in order to avoid the weaknesses of a sectarian view of the Christian religion. In the majority of communities the

churches have not brought themselves in a sufficiently cooperative and unified approach to their community task. The basis for any adequate relationship to other community agencies is a close cooperative relationship among the churches themselves with respect to community needs and issues, and the expression of this cooperative relationship through some recognized agency of inter-church cooperation such as the council of churches. In the meantime much can be done by any local church that is disposed to work with other agencies if it finds difficulty or delay in getting other churches to agree upon such a program of cooperation.

The relationships of churches to allied character education agencies also have wider state and national references. Significant experimental plans of cooperative activities have been worked out in a number of states in relation to the work of church councils. Almost without exception the agencies at work in local communities have their corresponding national councils. With these groups, too, the national religious agencies maintain informal contacts in an effort to relate policies and programs at points of mutual concern. There is a growing recognition of the importance of meeting the needs as they exist in local communities, since the growth of persons in character is the primary concern and national program plans are simply means to this end.

In cooperation with allied character education agencies, the church must be free to make its own evaluations and to make religiously meaningful the experience of persons anywhere. The church has the obligation to scrutinize critically and to oppose whatever exists in the programs of other agencies which weakens the Christian conception of life and the influence of the church in the lives of children, young people, and adults. The church must also be in an attitude of self-criticism and welcome sincere and constructive suggestions from other agencies.

IX. Religion and Public Education

WHEN ALL HAS BEEN SAID concerning the educational task of the church there remains the problem arising out of the secular character of American culture. Education has developed in this country under the tradition of separation of church and state with definite consequences, not all of which have been fully recognized.

The principal motive underlying the divorcement of public education from all church control was a desire to keep sectarian controversy out of the schools. That motive was valid and the results in that respect have been salutary. But the consequences of this separation have run far beyond that achievement and beyond the intent of those who most influenced the shaping both of American government and of American education. The importance of religion in the minds of the Founding Fathers is strikingly illustrated by a famous passage in the Ordinance of 1787: "Religion, morality and

knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall be forever encouraged." That American education should be without a religious orientation was farthest from the thought of the builders of the Republic.

It is a singular fact that although the declaration just quoted was widely adopted in state constitutions, "sectarian" instruction is quite generally prohibited either by state law or by state constitutions as interpreted by the courts, and no provision is made for any other kind of public religious education. The supposition seems to have been made, and to have passed unchallenged by the great Protestant majority, that all religious teaching is sectarian and that the fragmentary character of American Christianity makes permanently impossible any form of religious education in the public schools.

Any discussion of the relation of religion and education in American life must proceed upon the basis of two principles which are fundamental to the preservation of our liberties. These are the principle of religious freedom and the principle of public responsibility for education for citizenship in a democracy.

Religious freedom is one of the basic liberties guaranteed in the Constitution of the United States and in the constitutions of the several states. It is based in part upon the separation of church and state, but this is only one aspect of the matter. The principle of religious freedom does not preclude cooperation of the state and the churches. Neither does it mean that the state may rightfully ignore God or discredit the religious faith of its citizens.

Public responsibility for education for citizenship is now generally conceded. Education, as contrasted with propaganda or mere conditioning by training, is of essential importance to a democracy. The precise form in which the state may best fulfill its responsibility for the education of its citizens may vary, but the responsibility is inescapable.

The separation of religion and education into which we have drifted in America was not purposed; neither was it a necessary result of the principle of religious freedom and the principle of public responsibility for education for citizenship in a democracy. It has occurred because of certain conditions and circumstances, the most important of which are the jealous, divisive sectarian spirit with which we have cherished our religious differences and the general secularization of life which has characterized the closing nineteenth century and the twentieth century thus far.

Historically the drift toward non-religion in our schools is largely a result of the quarrels and protests of the churches and synagogues, or the people who have assumed to speak for them. Whenever a group, or even an individual, has chosen to object, on what are averred to be conscientious grounds, to some religious element in the program or curriculum of the public schools, that element has forthwith been eliminated, and no other religious element has

taken its place. The movement has been almost wholly negative; there has been no coming together of the different religious groups for a positive reconsideration of its total trend and inevitable results. Adherents of all faiths in America have been more concerned that the public schools should not contain any element to which they could object, than they have been to conserve in these schools the great principles of morals and religion upon which they agree. Protestant, Catholic, and Jew have shared in this movement. All must shoulder some of the responsibility for the situation into which we have drifted.

The foundations of America were laid in religious faith. Such faith has inspired our history and is embodied in our institutions. It lies at the heart of American culture. America has no state church; but the American State is not godless. It favors no sect, and fosters no sectarianism; but it protects religion. The distinction between sectarianism and religion has been maintained in many decisions made by our courts. The Supreme Court of the United States has declared: "The term religion has reference to one's views of his relations to his Creator and to the obligations they impose of reverence for His being and character and of obedience to His will. It is often confounded with the cultus or form of worship of a particular sect, but is distinguishable from the latter."

Underlying all differences, moreover, America has a common religious faith. Its citizens generally—Protestant, Catholic, and Jew—worship the one God, Creator of all things and Father of men. They believe that his will has been revealed in the life and literature of the Hebrew people, as this is recorded in the Bible, and that it is discernible in nature about us and in conscience within. They acknowledge the principles of human duty set forth in the Ten Commandments, in the teachings of the Hebrew prophets, in the Golden Rule, and in the law of love to God and to fellow men.

The religious faith of the American people is expressed in various public acts and customs of the federal, state, and municipal governments—the annual proclamation and observance of a Day of Thanksgiving to God, the setting aside of Sundays and certain religious festivals as legal holidays, the opening of the sessions of legislative assemblies with prayer, the form of oath used in courts of law and in the inauguration of public officials, the appointment of chaplains for the Army and Navy, and so forth. The property of churches used for religious purposes is exempt from taxation.

There is nothing in the status of the public school as an institution of the State, therefore, to render it godless. There is nothing in the principle of religious freedom or the separation of church and state to hinder the school's acknowledgment of the power and goodness of God. The common religious faith of the American people, as distinguished from the sectarian forms in which it is organized, may rightfully be assumed and find appropriate expression in the life and work of the public schools.

To omit religion from the public schools is to discredit religion in the minds of our children; and to convey to them the suggestion that religion is negligible or unimportant or irrelevant to the real business of life.

The danger involved in such neglect of religion is greater today than ever before just because the public schools are greater today than ever before. For the public school of a generation ago to omit religion would have been a matter of little consequence, for this school omitted a great many things. But the public schools of today have the dimensions of life itself. They provide for the education of children in practically every sound human interest—except religion. The ignoring of religion by the public schools conveys to children a strong negative suggestion.

The trend in American educational philosophy in recent years has been towards the establishment of education upon a broad cultural base. It is more and more contended that the school should be the community in miniature and that every legitimate community interest—civic life, industry, labor, social work—should find a place in its program. The one conspicuous exception is religion. A school which would apologize for one of its graduates who does not know how government, industry or recreation is organized for his own town may be quite complacent over graduating people who are religiously illiterate. The fault is not in the controlling philosophy or in the preference of administrators but in the complex of suspicion and fear that surrounds religious effort wherever the public interest as a whole is involved. The present trend in educational philosophy, no less than in religious thought, is in the direction of the inclusion of religious interests, organization and activity as part of a total community program of education.

The whole of the religious education of American children obviously cannot be undertaken in the public schools. That is the responsibility of the family, and of the churches and synagogues. We need more, not less, emphasis upon the sound home training of children and upon the well organized, effective service of the Sunday School, Vacation Church School and Weekday School of Religion.

But the public schools can and should include in their life that basic, elemental faith which is deeper and more fundamental than any of religion's institutional or sectarian forms—the faith that relates human life to God, the Source and Sustainer of all our powers. Let the public school exclude sectarianism, but make explicit its belief in God; let it leave to the family and to churches and synagogues the responsibility for education in the whole range of religion, but let it keep its own life provision for the education of children in due reverence for God and faith in God.

Such a policy would in no wise lessen the responsibility of the churches and synagogues for religious education. Their task would be simplified and their work rendered more effective by the laying of a foundation of general religious knowledge. Not only so, but a

serious obstacle to their efforts would be removed if the teaching of history and of the natural and the social sciences were carried on with an avowal of common faith in the significance of life, the enduring quality of its values and the critical importance of its decisions. More specifically, an adequate educational program in the schools would render the younger generation appreciative of the significance of the church and the synagogue. It would give them an understanding of the meaning of worship and of corporate religious effort, leaving them free to exercise intelligent choice as to their own affiliation. In short, public education should pass on along with the rest of the culture the tested values of religious experience that are a common possession of the people, regardless of creed, and prepare the way for participation, by free choice, in corporate religious life.

The Protestant churches have been experimenting during recent years with weekday religious education in an attempt to bridge the gap between religious and public education. Beginning some thirty years ago with a few experimental centers, the movement has slowly spread until several thousand communities, small and large, have weekday schools of religion. They are to be found in practically every state in the union. Through such a movement the churches are attempting to correlate religious instruction as far as possible with public instruction and still keep the control of religious education within their own hands and within the free choice of the pupils and of their parents. Usually such a program places religious instruction within the regular school day and under pedagogical conditions similar to those obtaining in the public schools.

Weekday religious education calls for the dismissal or release of pupils from the public schools, is entirely voluntary, does not force religious instruction of a particular kind upon any child, utilizes no public school funds for religious purposes and permits churches, individually and collectively, to provide for such instruction as they may choose. It does not "put religion into the public schools," but it does put formal religious instruction within the child's daily experience. Wherever weekday religious education is provided it virtually means that the church, or the community speaking through the churches, says to its youth, "We believe religion to be sufficiently important to rank alongside all other subjects and interests in your school program." It also means that the public schools, by permitting children to take religious instruction during regular school hours, encourage them to recognize religion as one of the primary concerns of life.

Weekday religious education is not a perfect solution to the problem of the divorcement of religion from general education. It suffers some severe limitations. But it does represent the most serious effort that the churches have yet made to bring religion closer to the center of the child's educational experience. Its future will depend in part upon the willingness of the churches to support this

form of religious instruction and the willingness of public school authorities to cooperate with the churches by the release or dismissal of the pupils.

X. Religion in Higher Education

THE CHURCH must provide a continuous process of Christian education suited to the needs of persons from early childhood through mature adulthood. It must meet such transitional crises as occur when the high school graduate leaves home for college, and when the alumnus assumes complete adult responsibility in home, church and community. The process of Christian education must meet the peculiar needs of college youth.

The Protestant churches were the pioneers in American higher education. Harvard was the first of a long succession of church colleges, established along the eastern seaboard, and then in every new territory to which Christian pioneers migrated. Many of these are now independent. In those early days only a very few young men were deemed worthy of higher education. Today, though the percentage is much higher, only a small fraction of our young people go to college. From this company should come much of the leadership for the church of today and tomorrow.

Many colleges are controlled by, or are closely related to a denomination or to several denominations. Others are independent; they may or may not be affiliated with one or more denominations; they may or may not regard themselves as Christian or religious institutions. There are also municipal and state colleges, universities, technical and professional schools, which cannot themselves carry on an adequate program of religious education. At all three types of institutions, the church has a responsibility.

The religious process in home and church should prepare the young person for the freedom of college years. It should help him to gain an intelligent understanding of the Christian religion, to commit his life to the will of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, to formulate a Christian philosophy of life which determines his everyday decisions, to appropriate and develop spiritual resources for his hours of solitude and social intercourse, and to experience a sense of fellowship with other Christians in the church universal. The process of Christian education should give him skill in the solution of personal and social problems, and should prepare him for future experiences by a realistic consideration of situations common to student days. Pastor, parent, and counselor will help him to choose wisely the college which he will attend, such choice being in terms of the Christian character of campus life, as well as of the academic standards of the school. When a young person leaves home for college, his home church will still consider him as a member of the parish, and will maintain a friendly contact with him while he is away and when he returns during vacations.

The church must follow its students. This cannot be done by a single church alone. But almost every church is a part of a larger fellowship, usually called a denomination. It is through the denominations, separately and in cooperation, that every local church should be able to extend the program of Christian education throughout the student years. The national boards of Christian education help to provide means through which every local parish may follow its students, whether to denominational, independent or tax-supported schools. The methods vary in different situations.

If the college is a denominational school, it will be presumably affiliated with a church board of education, and will cooperate in relating its program of Christian education to the total Christian education program of the church. Any Christian college will endeavor to make the total student experience a Christian experience. Its board of trustees will be composed of persons eager to provide the best Christian education for young people. The curriculum will include a strong department of religion, whose academic standards are high; the Christian religion will be contagious in the personalities of those who teach its courses. But the professors of religion will not be the only faculty members who teach religion; the instruction and influence of members of other departments will be definitely Christian. The relation between administration and faculty, and between faculty and students will be such as to constitute a continuous experience of Christian fellowship.

The chapel services will provide rich opportunities for worship, and the closest possible cooperation will be maintained between the college and the local churches. Students and faculty will share in projects of service and helpfulness through which Christian attitudes find practical expression. Opportunities for church or social work will be offered whereby skills are developed for church and community service after graduation.

Through orientation courses and personal counsel, freshmen will be guided with sympathetic understanding. Every effort will be made to reassure and mature the faith which the freshman possesses, and to develop a sound Christian faith in those who lack it. Sometime during the course, definite efforts will be made to provide an intellectual and spiritual synthesis, and to orient the student so that he may become an effective worker in the community and church to which he will go after graduation. The college leadership will help students to make wise vocational choices, choices which give expression to Christian purpose and conviction. Conscientious academic work will be expected. The students will be treated as persons whose judgment is worthy of respect, but all college policies (including fraternity life, athletic programs, and social activities) will be conducive to the highest moral conduct.

In those independent schools in which the Christian purpose is not dominant, and in tax-supported institutions of learning, the responsibility of the church is quite different. Even here it has a

right to insist that no education is true education which ignores the relationship of man to man, of man to the universe, of man to God; that no education is true education which is not basically concerned with the development and integration of personality in terms of the highest values known to man, values that have their source and validation in God. Much can be done to influence trustees and regents, so that scholars of moral conviction and religious faith will be chosen as presidents, and that faculties will be selected in terms of scholarship, teaching ability, and religious character. Upon many an independent and state university campus, strong support is given to theistic religion by faculty members, Christian in philosophy and spirit and loyal to the church. Courses in the history, literature, psychology and philosophy of religion are sometimes offered, and when this is impossible denominational or co-operative schools of religion are supported near the campus.

The function of the national boards of Christian education, in such a situation, is to strengthen the program of the churches adjacent to the campus. The pastors of these town-and-gown churches, or of strictly faculty-student churches, are virtually members of the staff of every local church from which students come to the university.

Whether it be through a student church, or a church foundation at a university, or through a local church serving a student constituency at a denominational college, the process of Christian education involves certain common elements. The minister serves in lieu of the home church pastor, as a friend and a trained counselor of young men and women temporarily in his parish. The church seeks, through a meaningful worship service, to maintain or establish the habit of church attendance. Every effort is made to help students to feel themselves a part of the parish, so that their sense of membership in the church universal is enhanced. Classes, clubs, and informal discussion groups provide programs for the enrichment of spiritual experience, for the maturing of Christian faith, and for the deepening and broadening of a sense of social responsibility. These close-knit groups offer recreational opportunities on the highest level, and surround the student with friends who give support to his noblest ideals.

Through service within the church and in the community, and through participation in missionary and social service projects, young Christians give practical expression to their religious idealism; an interchurch or interfaith fellowship broadens understanding and deepens sympathy, and helps to create a spirit which will provide leadership for the church universal. Sometime during this period, students are challenged to think and plan realistically for future professional or lay responsibility in the churches. Selected students are encouraged to engage in useful projects of summer service either in their home communities or in special missionary or social enterprises under national or regional auspices.

There is no pattern which can be set for the varied types of college communities. There are, however, certain common necessities. The home church bears responsibility for preparing its young people for the transition to student experience. The denomination is obligated to project and maintain a program by which it continues the process begun in home and church. The college administration is responsible for the spiritual as well as the intellectual and physical welfare of its students. The closest possible cooperation will exist between the college and the churches of the community. During this transition period between youth and full maturity, young people need both guidance and freedom in the development of religious ideas and programs. High-grade instruction about religion is only one of the elements of the college-church program; genuine experience in religion is the central need. Worship and instruction and activity will have value in themselves, but they are also to be regarded as preparation for the next step in the process of Christian education and service, namely, that which comes from adult responsibility in the work of a parish after graduation.

XI. The World Outreach of Christian Education

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION cannot confine itself to any race, color, or nation. The very nature of the revelation of God through Jesus Christ teaches that God is not only the creator and preserver of all things but that he looks upon the human race as a Father and that the attributes of fatherhood are the essence of his character. The commission given to Christians to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel" is not based upon any one verse of Scripture or any one message of our Lord. It is implicit in all his life and teaching.

This fact has profound significance for Christian education. The teacher's task is to guide in the development of Christlike persons, and one of the traits of character most difficult to produce in our age is an attitude of appreciation and tolerance for the stranger of some other color, race, or nation. The materials in Scripture and the Christian literature of later centuries, together with the activities of a well-rounded program of Christian education, make it possible for the Church of Jesus Christ to develop citizens of good will whose knowledge and sympathies reach to the ends of the earth. One of the most serious handicaps to international peace and prosperity is that the task is so great while the processes of education work so slowly that only a minority in any land have the ideals and the spirit of interracial brotherhood.

It was a wise man who said, "If our religion is false, we ought to reject it; if true, we are bound to propagate it." The Christian teacher is fortunate in having a faith to proclaim which makes every true follower of Jesus Christ eager to share his truth as well as some of his physical possessions with others. What better resource than this can a teacher have for character building!

Christian education must develop world-minded citizens. As the Madras International Conference stated, "National gods of any kind, gods of race or class, these are not large enough to save us. The recognition of God in Christ by no means robs a man of his nation or his family or his culture. When Christ is taken seriously by a nation or an ancient culture, he destroys no whit of good within it, but lifts it rather to its own high destiny. He does destroy exclusiveness, but in its place he causes to grow good will—a good will which is wider than national or cultural loyalties and corresponds to the largeness of God's love." If there were no other reasons, the world movement for Christianity could be justified by its tens of thousands of agents of good will serving humanity around the world.

One of the most significant aspects of the missionary movement is the contribution which it makes to the sending churches and sending countries. The younger churches growing in distant lands have not only gone far in the producing of strong nationals as leaders but out of their churches have already come great contributions to the interpretations of the Gospel in modern life. Kagawa is read and heard eagerly by Christians of every land, while Stanley Jones brings out of his experiences in India a message from "the Christ of the Indian Road" which has made him an evangelist of unique power and world-wide renown.

The World's Sunday School Association not only helps to send the Gospel through the teaching method to lands in all quarters of the globe, but it brings back to its principal supporting constituencies in Great Britain and America fresh illustrations of the power of Christ in lands either primitive or long dominated by other religions.

This is not the place in which to set forth the methods and materials of missionary education, but it is the place to remind ourselves that Christian education was never so greatly needed as this day of international strife and world-wide suffering. If true to the Gospel which we proclaim and the ethical ideals which Christians profess, we may bring to the human race the salvation it sorely needs.

One who knows the progress of the missionary movement around the world cannot help being encouraged. To be sure, nationalism in its new totalitarian aspects and the revivals in other religions have closed some doors of opportunity; nevertheless, not only is the number of professed followers of Jesus Christ growing and the strength of the younger churches increasing, but the permeating influence of Christian ideals and the spirit of Christ is even more notable. Despite these successes, the Christian forces are still just in the early stages of making a Christlike world. The unreached geographical areas and the unevangelized areas of life are many. The magnitude and difficulties would seem to be overwhelming except for the assured help of Almighty God. Christian education with its faith and other God-given resources finds in this world-wide human need its supreme opportunity.

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